

Castaways of Endor

Introduction

By Daniel Wallace and Amy Pronovost; Illustrations by Amy Pronovost

"The mediocrity of the Imperial mind continues to amaze. Even now, eight years after Endor gained fame as the site of a slugging match between the Rebellion and the Empire, the most up-to-date study of the Forest Moon's lifeforms is a report filed ages ago by stormtrooper scouts. By now every milk-whelp in the galaxy knows about Ewoks, Gorax, and Yuzzums. But what of Duloks, Phlogs, and Jindas? What of the way in which so many 'castaway' species have become an integral part of Endor's ecosystem? What of the shamanism and magic that has turned local kingpins into weather-controlling warlocks?"

This will be my third trip to the Forest Moon, and my second sojourn among the Gupins. I have a great fondness for shapeshifters, and the apparent Gupin ability to gain and shed mass at will is of particular interest to my Sanbra benefactors. Of course, the blasted grass trackers will be waiting for me -- but this time, I brought a concussion rifle."

*From the desk of Professor Mankuskett
Chair of Metagrowth and Polymorphism, University of Sanbra*

The backwaters of the Moddell sector are rarely visited by even the most adventurous of travelers. As if starved for company, the Forest Moon of Endor has sucked in hundreds of starships over the millennia and deposited their detritus in the woods and grasslands. The lucky survivors of these trips across the hyperspace shoals have scratched out new lives for themselves on this "desert island in space."

Some castaways on the Forest Moon have become well-known -- the tribe of Sanyassan Marauders and the Dathomiri witch, for example, who harried crash survivor Cindel Towani and her family prior to the destruction of the second Death Star. But many of Endor's castaway populations have been living on the moon for thousands of years, and over the generations they have become part of the moon's natural life-cycle. In 12 A.B.Y., biologists undertook a study of Endor's less prominent native and non-native lifeforms to learn how species that are given no other choice can cautiously learn to live together.

Shipwreck Moon

Countless vessels have crashed on Endor, most of their crewmembers dying on impact or passing away after fruitless years of waiting for rescue. But a few wayward freighters carried enough passengers to create self-sustaining alien populations. This artificial influx of non-native life changed the face of Endor forever.

- The colony ship *Free Enterprise* departed from Eriadu approximately 130 years before the Battle of Yavin, carrying several hundred Jinda and mandrill-faced Tulgah settlers. It vanished on its way to Kuna's Eye in the Moddell sector. No one back home learned of its fate until Rebel traders discovered the Forest Moon's flourishing Jinda and Tulgah populations shortly after the Battle of Endor.
- One of the earliest Starhunter menagerie arks disappeared in the vicinity of Endor approximately eight centuries B.B.Y. According to the ship's manifest, it carried creatures matching the descriptions of Gupins, tree goats, and super-fast, white-furred Teeks.
- No one is sure if the slave caravel *Sickly Tremor* brought Phlogs to Endor, but it is a leading theory among biologists. More than 1,100 years B.B.Y., the slavemaster Zephyrus boasted to equipment outfitters on Ovise III that he'd found workers who could heft a cargo skiff in one hand. The outfitters fitted the *Sickly Tremor* with durasteel cages that could each hold a dozen banthas, then Zephyrus left to collect his living payload. He was never heard from again.

Alien Species

Jindas

Jindas crashed on Endor aboard the colony ship *Free Enterprise*, and have optimistically made the best out of an unfortunate situation. They are jovial, exuberant beings who have a playful attitude towards life and love to entertain others. Jindas always have a smile for strangers but suffer from a terrible sense of direction.

The aliens vary from slender to rotund, but even the fattest Jinda seems filled with boundless energy. All Jindas have red pom-pom tufts of hair and black noses. If threatened, or when impressing females, male Jindas can balloon out their red-banded necks to make them seem larger than they are. Their blunt, cube-shaped teeth and large mouths make it clear that the Jindas are herbivores and love nothing more than a good meal.

Entertainment is the basis of Jinda society. All Jindas have an inborn performance skill, such as juggling, magic, dancing, or music. Their poor long-term memory is actually a storytelling asset, for their unintentional embellishments make the tales more entertaining. Despite the species' propensity for exaggeration, a Jinda story always contains a grain of truth.

The Jindas on the Forest Moon are nomads. They roam between far-flung settlements under the name "The Travelling Jindas", entertaining sentients and non-sentients alike. It is both a blessing and a curse that the Jindas have such a poor direction sense—they may avoid trouble by not running into a hostile Dulok tribe more than once, but they have extreme difficulty finding the Ewoks, who are their favourite audience. The Ewoks have dubbed this faulty orientation "The Curse of the Jindas," and the moon's few nomadic Ewok tribes are sometimes referred to as Jindas by more traditional Ewoks disdainful of their peripatetic lifestyle. The Jindas have no real enemies and sometimes act as neutral message-carriers between Endor's warring species.

Jinda chroniclers claim that their people once had a stable agricultural settlement on Endor. According to the tale, a mysterious, Force-strong "rock wizard" grew angry with them and decreed they would never again settle down in one place.

Gupins



Gupins are even shorter than Ewoks, but only when they want to be. These elfin shapeshifters have used their biological gifts to survive against much larger predators, who would otherwise have exterminated them long ago.

Planetary anthropologists believe the Gupins came to Endor aboard the *Starhunter Dhelba* menagerie ark, and so far no one has determined the species' planet of origin. Given their small size and genial temperaments, it seems likely that their shapeshifting abilities evolved as an adaptation against extreme environmental stress. On the Forest Moon, the rapacious grass trekkers have pushed the Gupin population to its survival limits.

Modern Gupins don't remember how their species first came to Endor, but have lived on their new home so long they refer to the grass trekkers as the "old enemy." For centuries they have inhabited a dormant, volcanic crater at the edge of the Desert of Salma, near the grass plains east of the Great Forest. Wells irrigate the crater's inner bowl, and the Gupins subsist on carefully-cultivated gardens and orchards. The community is barricaded against intrusion, for the grass trekkers (whose lair is only a short distance away) assault it at least once per local month. Gupins venture into the grasslands to trade with other civilizations, typically Jindas and Duloks, but do not stray far from their home. Most Ewoks have never seen a Gupin.

Gupins look vaguely human, but with bushy eyebrows, oversized front



teeth, and antennae in place of ears. All Gupins have tails, and in late adolescence they grow short membranous wings. Their shapeshifting abilities are not restricted by their musculature or skeletal structure, and Gupins have been known to squash themselves as flat as blankets or morph into four-legged beasts. To the fascination of xenobiologists, they can assume forms that are larger and heavier than their natural forms.

As a species, Gupins are highly sensitive to the living Force, a trait which appears to be linked to their shapeshifting. A Gupin may ask others to "draw out the energy in your minds and hold it firm" before he casts a shape, and this attention from other living beings seems to ease the transformation. In addition, a Force relic resting in a vessel called the Juniper Chest has become the centerpiece of Gupin life. The relic apparently amplifies the Gupins' natural morphic abilities. The Gupins have developed a host of unnecessary rituals surrounding the Juniper Chest, including a ceremony known as the Time of Renewal and a supposed "magical" key that opens the chest.

Totem Magic

The Force is strong on Endor. The Forest Moon is rich in life, and those with a sensitivity for the energies of living things can wield the powers of wizards. Because the disciplines of the Jedi Order have never been introduced here, the locals have developed superfluous, totemic trappings surrounding their use of the Force. Ewok shamanism, Dulok sorcery, and Gupin magic may employ different talismans and charms, but beneath the paraphernalia they are essentially the same.

Endor's totem magic is complicated by the presence of Force-magnifying artifacts found across the moon. Similar relics have been known for millennia--Sith amulets, for example, or the Kaiburr crystal of Mimban--and Endor is rumored to hold Force artifacts including the sunstar gem, the shadowstone, and the season scepter.

Duloks

Though not a castaway species, the meddlesome Duloks have become an inescapable headache for Endor's immigrant populations. Closely related to the Ewoks, the Duloks are bad-tempered swamp-dwellers who can be useful as trade partners but are more commonly feared as harmful raiders.

Duloks are taller than Ewoks, standing between 1.2-1.5 meters. Their body fur ranges in colour from moss green to murky brown and each has a long, stiff tail that ends in a bushy tuft. Their jaws jut out in a pronounced underbite, and their large, protruding lower canines are sometimes adorned with intricate tribal carvings. Duloks frequently shave, brand, and paint tribal marks into their fur, and wear feather and bone accessories to further declare their status within the tribe.

Unapologetic barbarians, the Duloks live in isolated tribes in the swamplands of Endor. They use simple wood-and-stone weapons to hunt, and dwell in mud huts or caves. They have great disdain for the Ewoks, believing that the forest spirits abandoned them when they gave the Ewoks the run of the forests and left the Duloks the swamps. This hatred has turned to war--not only between the Duloks and the Ewoks, but between Dulok tribes who compete for the swamp's scarce resources. The Ewoks know better than to underestimate their cousins, for many Ewok tribes have fallen to Dulok armies.

Dulok tribes are headed by a chief, with a revered shaman or medicine man offering advice. The shaman is often strong with the living Force and capable of great "magic." Many shamans dabble in dark energies, although a few use their abilities for the betterment of the tribe. These peaceful shamans are seen as eccentric oddities and often baffle their tribemates. Females are considered little more than pup-sitters and breeders; despite the fact that females are usually smarter than males and make excellent scouts, it is extremely rare to see a female shaman or warrior. Slavery is the primary form of barter between Dulok tribes, and they enjoy limited trade between the Jindas and the Gupins.



Creatures

Phlogs

A race of giants, Phlogs are believed to have arrived on the Forest Moon aboard an off-course slave caravel that vanished from sector logs. Some biologists believe that Endor's Gorax population came from the same ship, and that the two giant species may share an ancestral homeworld. So far no one has gotten close enough to the behemoths to collect a genetic sample.

Like the Gorax, the Phlogs have gravitated toward the driest and harshest areas of Endor. Almost all Phlogs inhabit the Desert of Simoom, a wasteland of powdery stone and armored lichen located south of the Great Forest, far from the Desert of Salma which is ruled by the Gorax. Phlogs are hunter-gatherers who subsist on desert fungus, as well as fruits and bark found on the outskirts of the forest. They wear tattered clothing and speak in their monosyllabic native tongue of Phlog, though a few have learned to speak a halting, pidgin form of Ewokese. Phlogs form closely-bonded family units and rarely travel far from their desert caves in Simoom. Residents of the Great Forest may go years without ever laying eyes on a Phlog, which is just the way most of them like it.

Male Phlogs can grow as tall as 20 meters, with females averaging 17 meters or less. They have tough, orangish skin and pointed nails for shredding bark from trees. The males have lumpy humanlike features with bulbous noses, while the females have flat, wide nostrils and horns on their heads that first appear in adolescence.

Phlogs are even-tempered, but an angry Phlog can destroy almost anything in its path. For this reason Phlogs have been courted by the Duloks and other hostile parties as muscle-for-hire. Since Phlogs are not the brightest creatures on Endor, they can easily be tricked into believing that another party has done them wrong. The Ewoks still tell tales of Feather Green Village, reduced to splinters in less than an hour when a Phlog assumed the Ewoks had stolen his lucky hanadak skull.

Phlogs also hate Gorax, and the two species sometimes come to blows in vicious territorial disputes. A Phlog and a Gorax clashing in a full-scale brawl is a terrifying sight.

Grass Trekkers

Brutish beasts populating the eastern edge of the Desert of Salma, grass trekkers are Endor-born predators who have long hated the Gupins for encroaching on their hunting territories. They are gangly, bipedal mammals standing between 3 and 3.5 meters tall, with black, greasy fur shot through with white streaks growing thickly over on their heads and backs. Their long snouts and yellow, pupil-less eyes make them look almost demonic. Though not fully sentient, grass trekkers can wield simple bludgeoning tools such as clubs and battering rams.

When hunting food, grass trekkers venture into the grasslands east of the Great Forest to prey on makants, dandelion warriors, and the occasional Gupin, but despite their name they prefer to live in the dead, dusty wastelands at Salma's fringe. There, not far from the Gupin fortress, the grass trekkers nest in an anthill-like structure known as the Shrine. The grass trekkers regularly band together and attempt to overrun the stronghold of their enemies, but the shape-changing Gupins usually send them running. The only creatures fierce enough to prey on grass trekkers are giant Gorax, who sometimes pass through the area on their way to menace the Ewoks' tree villages.



Makants

Makants are two-legged, mantis-headed insects that feed on fungi and meadow plants in Endor's expansive grasslands. They are fast runners and can fly short distances with their compact wings, but can only reach an altitude of three meters. Makants travel in small herds and are always on the alert for hungry grass trekkers. The creatures are skittish but friendly, and Gupins have been known to train them as mounts.

Dandelion Warriors

The dandelion warriors inhabit the leading edge of the Endor grasslands, where the meadow runs up against the border of the Great Forest. The dandelion warriors' frightful presence is the reason why few Ewoks have ever crossed the grasslands and reached the land of the Gupins. "Dandelion warrior" is, in fact, an Ewok appellation. The members of the species refers to themselves as *fftssfft*, a sound made by forcing air through tiny spiracles in their body-stems.

Dandelion warriors resemble thick-stalked, yellow-tufted plants just over a meter in height. When they detect movement their eyes flash open, their arms extend from their body-stems, and their tufts bristle to form a thicket of menacing spines. An angry dandelion warrior will hurl its quills in a targeted spray toward its victim, who usually collapses to the ground, skewered like a pincushion.

One out of every one hundred quills is envenomed, and once this poison quill has embedded itself in its target its trailing end splits to form a distinctive starburst shape. Though deadly, these "star urchin" quills have applications in Ewok medicine.

The dandelion warriors' reason for killing appears to be purely territorial--the creatures draw all the sustenance they need directly from the soil.

Choreamnos (Tree Goats)

Choreamnos, known colloquially on Endor as blasé tree goats, are smelly, non-native herbivores that spend their lives hanging upside down from tree branches and grazing on leaves. At first glance they seem sluggish, but when threatened they scurry toward the highest point available. Both male and female choreamnos sport curved horns and beards, and only tree goat herders can tell the two genders apart. Tree goats are herded by many Endor denizens for their meat and sweet milk.

Wisties

The Wisties of Endor are tiny, glowing humanoid sprites who inhabit the deep forests. Hot summer nights are often illuminated by hundreds of Wisties zipping about in a dazzling light display. Wisties are shy creatures, but occasionally play tricks on wayward travellers.

Wisties have rightly earned the nickname "firesprites." Their bodies generate heat, which--when fanned by their rapidly-beating wings--produces light. When Wisties are angered they can increase the heat to such a degree that their bodies burst into flame, allowing them to burn through traps and nets. In one incident, the Tulgah witch Morag used Wisties to trigger a forest fire that nearly destroyed the Ewok settlement of Bright Tree Village.

Because Wisties are rare and extremely beautiful, they fetch a high price on the black market. Sadly, the sprites are becoming rare on Endor due to this illicit trade.



"We Are The E-E-E-Ewoks..."

The aliens and creatures in "Castaways of Endor" originally appeared in Nelvana's *Ewoks* animated TV series, which aired in the U.S. on ABC's Saturday morning schedule from 1985-86. Though largely forgotten in modern *Star Wars* continuity, the *Ewoks* cartoon featured some sharp scripts from Emmy award-winning *Batman* scribe Paul Dini and a funky opening number by blues artist Taj Mahal. Eight episodes from the series were combined to form two "mini-movies" on a 2004 DVD release, but many episodes of the series have yet to appear on any home format.

The following episodes from the show's first season will provide further expansion on this article's content. A word of warning: you won't be able to get the theme song out of your head for days.

- "The Cries of the Trees": The Wisties set off a forest-cooking blaze in this inaugural Ewoks episode.
- "The Tree of Light," "Wicket's Wagon," "Asha": Duloks play the heavies in many episodes of the series, but these three selections are representative of the Dulok brand of vile villainy.
- "Rampage of the Phlogs," "Blue Harvest": The Forest Moon's giant Phlogs cause headaches for the tiny Ewoks in this pair of adventures.
- "To Save Deej," "Land of the Gupins": Dandelion warriors are introduced in the first episode, grass trekkers and makants play a role in the second, and both episodes showcase the shape-changing Gupin species.
- "The Traveling Jindas," "The Curse of the Jindas": Everything you ever wanted to know about Jindas can be found here. "The Traveling Jindas" contains some quick shots of tree goats.

Daniel Wallace is the *New York Times* bestselling author or co-author of more than a dozen *Star Wars* books, including *The New Essential Guide to Characters*, *The New Essential Chronology*, *The Complete Star Wars Encyclopedia*, and the upcoming *Star Wars Atlas*. A lifelong genre fan, his other books include *The Marvel Encyclopedia* and *The Art of Superman Returns*.

Amy Pronovost is primarily an illustrator but she's extraordinarily pleased that Castaways of Endor is her first real pro writing. Some of her small writing nibbles include one liner cartoon strips for *Star Wars Kids* magazine. Amy has worked with Dan Wallace behind the scenes, designing and writing lore for various creatures and aliens in the *Star Wars* galaxy such as the Amaranans and Bursa. Her illustration work can be found throughout StarWars.com and on trading cards. An aspiring childrens book writer, one of her goals is to get one of her books published.